

Nutrition

Nutrition How much of each food group do I need? Check out the chart below to find out how much teens need from each group.

Mix up your choices within each food group.



Focus on fruits. Eat a variety of fruits – whether fresh, frozen, canned or dried – rather than fruit juice for most of your fruit choices. Try melons such as cantaloupe, berries such as blueberries, and citrus fruit such as grapefruit. Teens need 2 cups of fruits each day.



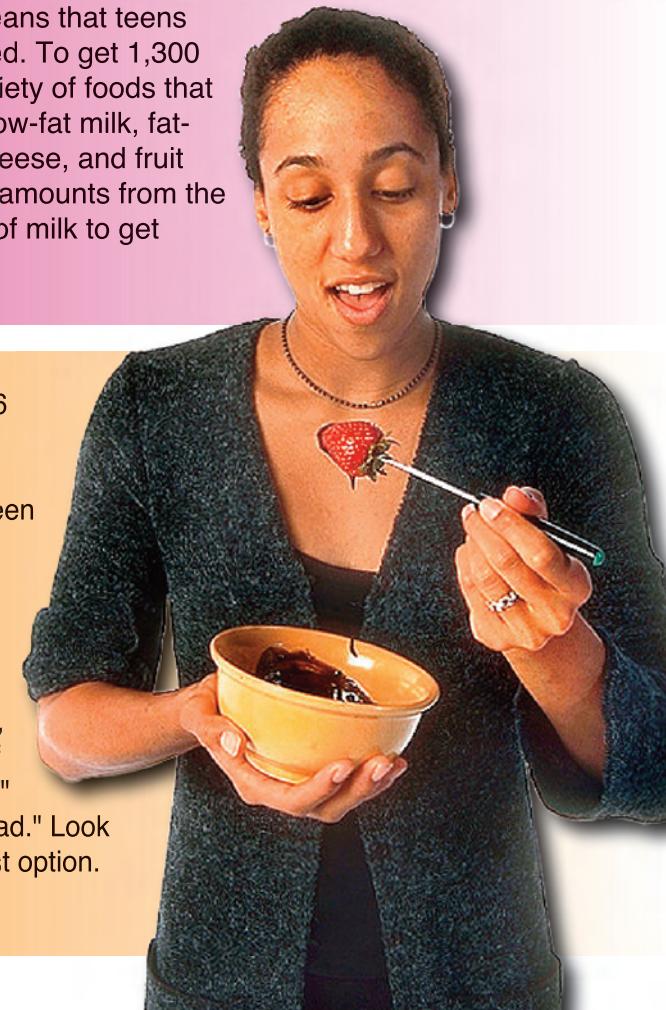
Vary your veggies. Eat more dark green veggies, such as broccoli, kale, and other dark leafy greens; orange veggies, such as carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash; and beans and peas, such as pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans, split peas and lentils. Teen girls need 2½ cups of vegetables each day while teen boys need 3½ cups each day.



Get your calcium-rich foods. Teens need 1,300 milligrams of calcium every day, which equals 130% of the DV (Daily Value) of the 1,000 milligrams that is recommended for adults. This means that teens need 30% more calcium than adults need. To get 1,300 milligrams each day, drink and eat a variety of foods that are high in calcium, such as fat-free or low-fat milk, fat-free yogurt, American cheese, ricotta cheese, and fruit yogurt and consume the recommended amounts from the other food groups. It would take 3 cups of milk to get 1,300 mg of calcium.



Make half your grains whole. Of the about 6 ounce-equivalents of grains teen girls need every day, at least 3 should be whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta. Teen boys need 9 ounce-equivalents of grains every day, with at least 4½ ounces from whole grains. One ounce-equivalent is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ¼ cup of cooked rice or pasta. Look to see that grains such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn are called "whole" in the list of ingredients. Bread that is just called "wheat" bread is not the same as "whole wheat bread." Look for "whole wheat" to know it is the healthiest option.





Go lean with protein. Choose lean meats and poultry that are baked, broiled or grilled. And vary your protein choices by also eating more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds. Teen girls need about 5½ ounces of lean protein each day while teen boys need 6½ ounces of lean protein each day. A 2-3 ounce serving of meat, poultry, or fish is equal to the size of a deck of cards.

Know the limits on fats, salt, and sugars. Read the Nutrition Facts label on foods. Look for foods low in saturated fats and trans fats. Choose foods and drinks with little salt (sodium) and/or added sugars (caloric sweeteners).



How many calories do I need?

In general, teen girls need about 2,000 calories each day and teen boys need 2600 calories each day. Teens who are really active may need more calories. These calories should be chosen from low-fat, lean foods from the major food groups.

How much exercise do I need?

Teens should get at least 60 minutes of exercise that is moderate in intensity each day.

What's a Healthy Weight?

Some teens have a hard time knowing what a healthy weight is, especially with all the body changes that are taking place. Girls especially may think they need to be thinner even if they are not overweight. If you're worried about your weight, talk to your family doctor. Your doctor can help you find the best way to be at a weight that is healthy for you. This may include having you see an expert in nutrition. And remember, weight gains are a normal part of growing up.

Thinking of going on a diet?

Many teens who go on diets don't need to lose weight. Pressure from media images, friends—and sometimes parents—to be very slim may cause you to have a distorted body image. Having a distorted body image is like looking into a funhouse mirror: You see yourself as fatter than you really are.



Do's and Don'ts of Healthy Weight Management

DO

Change your habits to focus on healthy foods and exercise. Overweight or not, regular daily exercise is important to look and feel your best. If you do need to lose weight, stepping up your activity level will help. Exercise increases your lean body tissue, which will help you burn calories more quickly.

A healthy diet is one that has balance, variety and healthy serving sizes. Limit the amount of high-calorie foods that you eat. If high fat foods are among your favorites, balance those foods with fruits and vegetables, which are generally lower in fat and calories.

Try to eat a wide variety of foods to keep from getting bored and to make sure your diet is balanced. Keep portion sizes reasonable so that you can have a dessert once in a while without taking in too many calories.

Another way to lower your calorie intake is to replace the regular foods you eat with lower-fat options. Try these tips: Switch to 1 percent or fat-free milk instead of whole milk Try nonfat or low-fat frozen yogurt, or nonfat or low-fat ice cream, instead of regular ice cream Have pretzels instead of corn chips or potato chips Switch your fries for a small baked potato with a little low-fat sour cream Remember, low-fat doesn't always mean low calorie. For example, extra sugars may be added to low-fat muffins or desserts to make them taste better. But, they may be just as high in calories as the regular kinds.

DON'T

Don't skip meals, eat only bread and water, take diet pills or dietary supplements, or make yourself vomit. You may make it through the end of the week and maybe even lose a pound or two, but you're unlikely to keep the weight off. Forced-vomiting is a sign of an eating disorder called bulimia, which can cause serious health problems.

Don't deprive yourself of foods you love, because you'll be more likely to binge or over eat... and you may gain even more weight.

Low-calorie diets that allow only a few types of foods can be bad for your health because they don't allow you to get enough vitamins and minerals. Quick weight loss from very-low-calorie "starvation diets" can cause serious health problems in teenagers, such as gallstones, hair loss, fatigue, and diarrhea.

Don't believe advertisers trying to sell you miracle foods that burn fat. Foods don't burn fat, they make fat when we eat more than we need. Also, stay away from diets that claim you can lose weight without exercise or say you will lose more than 2 pounds per week.



Healthy snack ideas:

- Baked potato chips or tortilla chips with salsa
- Pretzels (lightly salted or unsalted)
- Bagels with tomato sauce and low-fat cheese (low-fat version of a pizza)
- Flavored rice cakes (like caramel or apple cinnamon)
- Popcorn – air popped or low-fat microwave
- Veggies with low-fat or fat-free dip
- Low-fat cottage cheese topped with fruit or spread on whole-wheat crackers
- Ice milk, low-fat frozen or regular yogurt (add skim milk, orange or pineapple juice, and sliced bananas or strawberries to make a low-fat milk shake)
- Frozen fruit bars
- Vanilla wafers, gingersnaps, graham crackers, animal crackers, fig bars, raisins
- Angel food cake topped with strawberries or raspberries and low-fat whipped cream
- String cheese



Healthy ways to gain weight

Have you ever been teased about being too thin? Have ever been called too skinny to the point that it began to worry you? Although most teen girls are concerned about being overweight, some may be worried about being too thin.

If this is your concern, first talk to your parent(s) and your doctor. Here are some tips for gaining weight the healthy way:

Tip #1:

Eat More You may think "duh," but many people might not think of this right away. Extra calories above your daily needs can add pounds. Just try to pick foods rich in nutrients, such as complex carbohydrates (whole wheat breads, pasta, or potatoes), milk or other dairy products, or "good fat" (avocado, peanut butter and olive or canola oil).

Tip #2:

Increase "Good Fat" Increasing mono- and polyunsaturated fats, found in foods such as olive oil, canola oil, peanut butter, avocados, and nuts, can be good for you, as well as adding some pounds to your weight.